

## Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 020425

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ORIGIN SS-30

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S/S- MR. GAMMON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 020425

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: XC VN VS LA CB PINT PFOR MILI

SUBJECT:INDOCHINA SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 24-30

PASS TO ASST SECY INGERSOLL

1. TRANSMITTED FOR YOUR INFORMATION IS SUMMARY FROM EA BUREAU INDOCHINA SITREP COVERING PERIOD 24-30.

2. CAMBODIA: DURING THE PAST WEEK, THE NEW LONG BORET ADMINISTRATION FACED SEVERE CHALLENGES AS PHNOM PENH WAS SHELLED, AS THE STUDENT-GOVERNMENT CONFRONTATION CONTINUED AND AS BUDDHIST MONKS BEGAN A HUNGER STRIKE FOR PEACE. IN RESPONSE TO THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY SITUATIONS, THE GKR SUSPENDED CERTAIN CIVIL RIGHTS, INCLUDING PUBLIC MEETINGS AND THE SANCTITY OF PRIVATE HOMES. PRINCE SIHANOUK RETURNED TO CANTON FROM HANOI WHERE HE RENEWED HIS INTRANSIGENT STAND TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS. MEANWHILE, THE KHMER RENEWED EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH COLOMBIA AND CHILE. THE MILITARY SITUATION EASED SOMEWHAT, AS ENEMY ATTACKS WERE CONTAINED AND THE SHELLING OF PHNOM PENH CEASED ON JANUARY 29. THE MEKONG REMAINS THE ONLY LOC OPEN TO PHNOM PENH. RICE STOCKS IN PHNOM PENH ARE IN GOOD SHAPE, AND THERE IS HOPE THAT IN-

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 020425

CREASED AMOUNTS OF POL IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR MAY BE SECURED FROM SAIGON. US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR FY 74 NOW STANDS AT \$233,652,000.

3. LAOS: THE MILITARY SITUATION WAS QUIET WITH ONLY FOUR MINOR INCIDENTS REPORTED. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR AND HIS PARTY WERE SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO VIENTIANE TODAY AFTER THEIR VISIT TO SAM NEUA, AS THE POLISH AND INDIAN ICC DELEGATES BEGAN THEIR VISIT AT THE INVITATION OF THE LPF. STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN PAKSE, TRIGGERED IN PART BY THE FUEL SHORTAGE, ENDED UPON RLG ASSURANCES OF REMEDIAL ACTION. WHILE STUDENT LEADERS WERE REPORTED TO BE PLANNING SIMILAR DEMONSTRATIONS IN VIENTIANE, THE POL SITUATION EASED, AS THE THAIS RELEASED SHIPMENTS BEING HELD AT THE BORDER. IN THE JCCIA, THE TWO SIDES' DELEGATES SIGNED THE AGREEMENT ON THE PMF, NAMED THEIR RESPECTIVE PMF COMMANDERS, AND DISCUSSED OTHER ASPECTS OF THE NEUTRALIZATION OF THE CAPITALS. SOUPHANOUVONG'S LATEST LETTER TO SOUVANNA WAS MODERATE IN TONE AND AUTHORIZED PHOUN TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF THE FORMATION OF THE PGNU. AN ADB SURVEY TEAM DEPARTED LAOS AFTER A THREE-WEEK VISIT.

4. VIETNAM: MILITARY ACTIVITY DROPPED TO VERY LOW LEVEL DURING THE TET HOLIDAY PERIOD ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING UPSURGE, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF THE LE MINH(PLEI DJERENG) BORDER CAMP. IN A TET SPEECH PRESIDENT THIEU WARNED OF THE COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE, ADMITTED ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND ASSERTED THAT HE WOULD RETURN TO THE "LIFE OF A PEACEFUL CITIZEN" WHEN PEACE RETURNED TO THE COUNTRY. IN THE LA CELLE ST. CLOUD AND THE TPJMC TALKS GVN DELEGATES SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCESSFULLY TWEAK THE COMMUNISTS ON THEIR LACK OF POSITION ON THE CHINESE ATTACK ON THE PARACELS. MEANWHILE, THE PRC HAS INFORMED US THAT IT WILL RELEASE FIVE SICK AND WOUNDED VIETNAMESE CAPTURED IN THE PARACELS FIGHT AS WELL AS THE US DAO CIVILIAN ALSO CAPTURED THERE. THE RELEASE WILL TAKE PLACE JANUARY 31 AT THE HONG KONG BORDER. FACED WITH A CLEAR LACK OF THE NINE VOTES NECESSARY TO INSCRIBE AN ITEM ON THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL'S AGENDA, THE GVN WITHDREW ITS REQUEST FOR A MEETING ON THE PARACELS ISSUE.

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 020425

5. THE IBRD MEETING ON INDOCHINA RECONSTRUCTION SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 11-12 WILL GO ON DESPITE THE RECENT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES VOTE AGAINST THE IDA REPLENISHMENT. IN SAIGON PETROLEUM PRODUCT PRICES ROSE AGAIN (65 TO 140) CAUSING A RISE IN THE RETAIL PRICE INDEX DESPITE THE NORMAL POST-TET DECLINE IN OTHER PRICES.

6. BRITISH, DUTCH AND CANADIAN AMBASSADORS-DESIGNATE TO HANOI HAVE BEEN DELAYED INDEFINITELY IN PRESENTING THEIR CREDENTIALS BECAUSE OF THEIR COUNTRIES' REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE THE PRG. JAPAN IS HAVING SIMILAR TROUBLE IN ITS TALKS WITH DRV REPRESENTATIVES IN VIENTIANE. HEADS OF ICCS DELEGATIONS

DEPARTED FOR A JANUARY 29 TO FEBRUARY 1 VISIT TO HANOI. KISSINGER

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